

MAYOR & COUNCIL AGENDA COVER SHEET

MEETING DATE:

April 23, 2007

CALL TO PODIUM:

David B. Humpton
City Manager

RESPONSIBLE STAFF:

David B. Humpton

Tony Tomasello
Assistant City Manager

AGENDA ITEM:

(please check one)

	Presentation
	Proclamation/Certificate
	Appointment
	Public Hearing
	Historic District
	Consent Item
	Ordinance
	Resolution
	Policy Discussion
X	Work Session Discussion Item
	Other:

PUBLIC HEARING HISTORY:

(Please complete this section if agenda item is a public hearing)

Introduced	
Advertised	
Hearing Date	
Record Held Open	
Policy Discussion	

TITLE:

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL TRAVEL POLICY

SUPPORTING BACKGROUND:

At the Mayor and Council meeting of March 19, 2007, staff was directed to come back to the Council with a draft Mayor and City Council Travel Policy. A detailed memo relating to this matter, the proposed new policy, and the policies of a number of local jurisdictions are attached.

Attachments: Memo from City Manager Humpton
Draft Mayor & City Council Travel Policy
Chart of Travel Policy of Other Jurisdictions

DESIRED OUTCOME:

Hear Presentation, Provide Guidance

Memorandum to: Mayor and City Council

From: David B. Humpton

Date: April 19, 2007

Re: Mayor & City Council Travel Policy

At the Mayor and Council meeting of March 19, 2007, I was directed to come back with an “official” Mayor and City Council City’s Travel Policy. The discussions that evening suggested that our current policy is workable, but that it should be formally presented and adopted. Additionally, as a result of any research we conducted, I was to make any recommendations for modifications that I believed were appropriate. I will be proposing two changes as described below.

Staff has researched the policies of a number of other local governments in the area. These are local governments that we regularly compare ourselves to on policy matters. A chart of their basic travel polices is attached. There are some points of consistency but no two are exactly alike. Staff has developed a draft Mayor & Council Travel Policy document that we believe balances reasonable expense controls with simplicity of administration.

The new policy proposes that we move to a *per diem* system for meal expenses. This is the most common form of system used. It will be simpler to administer and will allow more accurate budgeting for travel expenses. The per diem rates are described in the attached policy document.

Additionally, our research indicates that very few organizations provide for travel expenses for spouses. Locally, only the City of Greenbelt allows it under certain circumstances. It has been our tradition to allow spouses of the Mayor and Council to travel with them to certain events. I am herein proposing that we restrict spouse travel expenses to only the National League of Cities and Maryland Municipal League main conferences each year.

I will be discussing this matter during the work session scheduled for April 23rd, 2007. Please feel free to contact me with any preliminary questions or concerns.

Attachments: Proposed Mayor & City Council Travel Policy
Chart of Travel Policies of Other Jurisdictions

DRAFT

Mayor & City Council Travel Policy

Purpose To establish criteria for payment and reimbursement of travel expenses incurred by the Mayor, City Council members, and members of City Boards and Commissions who travel in the performance of their official functions.

General Policy The City of Gaithersburg recognizes that the Mayor, City Council members and members of City Boards and Commissions travel to locations within and outside the State of Maryland for the purpose of representing the City at conferences and meetings, as well as to receive education and training to enhance their skills relating to the performance of their duties within the City government. In formulating this Travel Policy, it is further recognized that tangible benefits are gained through attendance at such events, including the informal networking and information exchanges that often occur. The expense of such travel is therefore appropriate for the City to bear.

It is understood herein that an individual traveling under this Policy is expected to exercise reasonable care in incurring travel expenses. Excess costs, circuitous routes, luxury accommodations and/or meals, and unnecessary services solely for the convenience or personal preference of the traveler are not acceptable under this Policy. Travelers will be held responsible for any additional expenses incurred for personal preference or convenience.

Meal Expenses The City employs a *per diem* system for meal expenses. The aggregate daily total *per diem* is \$50; which will be reviewed and amended as needed from time to time. Travelers can receive this amount as an advance, be reimbursed, or use a municipal credit card for meal expenses. No receipts are required to be submitted to receive the *per diem* rate.

Reimbursement for meal expenses of up to \$65 per day may be made if accompanied by receipts and the expenses are deemed in conformance with this Policy. Any meal expenses in excess of \$65 per day are the responsibility of the traveler.

Lodging/Transportation Expenses City staff will arrange for accommodations (lodging) and transportation (airfare, train, etc.) with an emphasis on obtaining the best price, taking into consideration reasonable time and location constraints. Staff will make reservations with sufficient lead times to obtain the highest discounts. Airfare will be coach or business class, whichever is less. Lodging at conference venues often offers a higher value, even though the nightly rate is slightly higher, as transportation costs (cabs, etc.) are reduced and additional time is made available for conference activities. Whenever possible, municipal credit cards will be used to ensure that the most accurate records are maintained. Travelers using personal methods of payment are eligible to receive reimbursement provided proper receipts are provided.

Spouse Travel A spouse of the Mayor or a member of the City Council will be allowed travel privileges (airfare, lodging, meal *per diem*, etc.) only to the National League of Cities and Maryland Municipal League main conferences each year.

Alcohol No alcoholic beverages may be included in any request for reimbursement under this Policy.

April 23, 2007



TRAVEL POLICY OF OTHER JURISDICTIONS

JURISDICTION	MEAL PER DIEM/MEAL REIMBURSEMENT
ROCKVILLE	Elected Official/City Employee - Basic per diem and high cost per diem rates are set in accordance with IRS regulations. Depending on the area, the per diem can be anywhere between \$39 per day and \$64 per day. The IRS regulations list the per diem costs associated with each area. Local meals are reimbursable if the employee attends a meeting, seminar, etc. that requires the employee to eat a meal away from their normal work site. Meals with City employees and elected officials are reimbursed under circumstances approved by the Department Director or City Manager. If receipts are provided, the City will reimburse the actual amount spent up to the limit specified. Generally, this higher amount will be \$10 above the non-receipts per diem established by the IRS.
GREENBELT	Elected Official/City Employee - Provides a maximum reimbursement of \$50 per day to cover the cost of meals. Receipts are required. The guideline is that \$10 will be allowed for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$25 for dinner. <i>The City may pay for a banquet if it is customary for the spouse to attend with the City employee/official.</i>
FREDERICK	Elected Official/City Employee - A per diem allowance (\$40) applies to overnight business trips - \$8 for breakfast, \$12 for lunch, \$20 for dinner. Conferences and training held within the City of Frederick and immediate areas are not eligible for meal reimbursement. Only employees will be reimbursed for expenditures. This does not include spouses, children, etc.
BOWIE	Elected Official/City Employee - There is no written policy with regard to travel. Elected officials must pay for their families' expenses if they travel with them on City business. Travel expenses are listed in the budget for officials and upon completion of an expense report, travel expenses are reimbursed to the official.
ALEXANDRIA	Elected Official/City Employee - A per diem payment for meals will be paid at \$35 for a 24 hour period and \$20 for travel more than three hours but less than twenty-four hours. There is no reference to spouse reimbursement or payment but it is noted that these rules apply to all City employees and other authorized persons traveling on official City business.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	Elected Official/City Employee - A per diem payment of not more than \$35 per day to cover the cost of meals and tips for employees.
ALL	SPOUSE TRAVEL Do not pay for spousal travel.
ALL	REGISTRATION – Elected Official/City Employee cover the cost or reimburse the cost for registration of conferences, conventions, etc. Note that Greenbelt will pay for spouse attendance at a conference at which it is customary for both City employee/official and his/her spouse to be in attendance. <i>Greenbelt may pay for spouse attendance if it is customary for both the City employee/official and his/her spouse to be in attendance.</i>
ALL	LODGING - Elected Official/City Employee cover the cost or reimburse the cost for lodging at conferences or cover the cost of comparable hotels.
ALL	LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL TRAVEL - Elected Official/City Employee cover the cost of local and non-local travel, federal mileage regulations are used, and all choose the lowest cost for air travel.